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Maulanen

Local History of the Past 100 years

This story is about the Mining history and Community Development of National Mine. It covers the time period between the late 1850's and the 1960's.

The first mining operations were the old Foster Pit and the old Tilden Mine located along the Cliffs Drive, well in National Mine.

Of course then they didn't have as sophisticated mining techniques as we do now so part of the mining operations were accomplished by charcoal kilns which were also located along the Cliffs Drive. This was between 1850 and 1860, and these mining operations did not operate after that. There stood a small community of 12 log houses built for the miners and their families above the present Tilden Lake Road. The Captain of this mine lived along the Cliffs Drive about 1/2 mile from the charcoal kilns. Following

the captain's death his house later became the first Cliffo Ridge Farm School.

After a while, a second mining operation was constructed. It was called the Parson Mining Co., located on the north end of National Mine, better known as the Parson Pit.

This particular mine was operative in the late 1860's, and shortly afterwards, two communities came to life, Sunny Side and Tower National Mine. Unfortunately, this was short lived as mining methods weren't very good making it far too costly to operate any further.

Things started to look dim for the National Mine area but then a third mining operation and community came to life at the Fitch Mine, located in the New Best Location. This little community was owned by a Mr. Merriweather. Unfortunately this was also short lived as it started in the early 1870's

and was terminated in the mid-1870's.

Later on a fourth property was started, The Mitchell Mine, owned by Captain Sam Mitchell of Negamuel. Its location was below the existing home of Ken Alderton. As a result of this operation the community of Mitchell Hill sprang up. The operation however was later taken over by the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company.

After things started to look bad for the National Mine location again, a new mining operation and the largest contributor to the overall development of National Mine was the Upper and Lower shaft of the Section 21 mine, located below the present National Mine School and half way down Brooks Hill. This was originally owned by the Lake Superior Mining Co. and later taken over by the Oliver Iron Mining Co., a branch operator of the U.S. Steel Co. This operation was responsible for most of the remaining buildings

and developments in the total of National Mine location. This particular mine was developed in the late 1870's and operated until its closing in 1906. The total operation of this mine employed approximately 200 men. Since the mine employed so many people, National Mine became big enough to have its first store and post office, which was owned by a Mr. James Lucks. A few years later, Mrs. August Annala operated Annala's store, which is now known as the County Market. At the time National Mine wasn't very big but it did have a meat market which is the present home of Eugene Kiiskila. The market was owned and operated by Mr. Henry Keta. National Mine also had a shoe maker shop, below Dick Wallines present home. This was owned and operated by Mr. Juntilla.

As the years went by, the community developed and so did the town hall and

the respective clubs and churches. There was an English Methodist church, a Finnish Lutheran church, which is still standing, a Swedish church, which is now the house next to the town hall, and a Norwegian church, which is still standing and located in Mr. Amstrong yard. National Mine also had a Sons of St. George Lodge, which met in the old Red School House which was located below the ball diamond. Along with the Sons of St. George Lodge was also the Winthrop Band. These were both active in the 1890's along with the National Mine Young Mens Club, which existed until 1934 and then was dissolved.

The final mining operation in National Mine was the Braastad Mining Co. located in front of Bill Hainala's house but this only operated in the summer months. Mr. Braastad, the sole owner of this mine, lived in Ishpeming. A few houses were built to accompany this mine also.

The last and most productive

industry was the Hercules Powder Co.
located at the Finn Farm location
and it lasted for 40 years until
its termination in the 1960's.